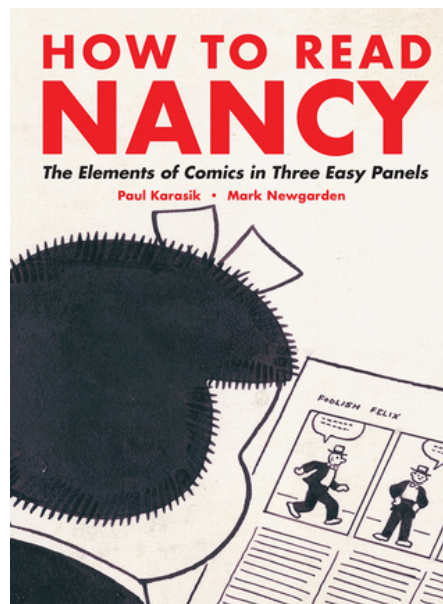




How to Read Nancy: The Elements of Comics in Three Easy Panels

Paul Karasik , Mark Newgarden

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How to Read Nancy: The Elements of Comics in Three Easy Panels Paul Karasik , Mark Newgarden Everything that you need to know about reading, making, and understanding comics can be found in a single *Nancy* strip by Ernie Bushmiller from August 8, 1959. Paul Karasik and Mark Newgarden's groundbreaking work *How to Read Nancy* ingeniously isolates the separate building blocks of the language of comics through the deconstruction of a single strip. No other book on comics has taken such a simple yet methodical approach to laying bare how the comics medium really works. No other book of any kind has taken a single work by any artist and minutely (and entertainingly) pulled it apart like this. *How to Read Nancy* is a completely new approach towards deep-reading art. In addition, *How to Read Nancy* is a thoroughly researched history of how comics are made, from their creation at the drawing board to their ultimate destination at the bookstore. Textbook, art book, monogram, dissection, *How to Read Nancy* is a game changer in understanding how the "simplest" drawings grab us and never leave. Perfect for students, academics, scholars, and casual fans.

How to Read Nancy: The Elements of Comics in Three Easy Panels Details

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From Reader Review How to Read Nancy: The Elements of Comics in Three Easy Panels for online ebook

Derek Royal says

Absolutely fascinating! Karasik and Newgarden do a phenomenal job of close reading one Nancy strip and then demonstrating how it works. The core of the text is the more formal examination of the strip, breaking down its elements across 44 steps or approaches. But the authors also provide a succinct biographical overview of Bushmiller and appendixes that explore a variety of cultural and industry-related contexts. A must-read for anyone interested in comics form and how the medium works.

Kirsti says

Much more complex and sophisticated than I had anticipated. I am now a fan of Ernie Bushmiller.

Bob says

How to Read Nancy is a superb book. Ingenious concept, attractive design, clear writing, and perfect editing — I didn't see a single typo!

Aaron says

Probably the best book ever written about how to read comics.

Comics Alternative says

<http://comicsalternative.com/comics-a...>

Cat says

Read a bit, discovered it wasn't my cup of tea, but- I am absolutely certain, that there is a budding comic strip writer, who is going to relish this book! I was a fan of the Nancy comics as a kid, but I guess not enough of one to want to look behind the curtain and see the wizardry that create it all. This book is going to make some readers very happy!

Jesse Richards says

This book is insane.

Peter Landau says

Kudos to Paul Karasik and Mark Newgarden for their entry into the canon of Nancy, with HOW TO READ NANCY: THE ELEMENTS OF COMICS IN THREE EASY PANELS. They might not be the first to find inspiration from the bristle-headed icon — she's been the subject of fine artists almost since her inception — but no one has yet to parse the genius of Ernie Bushmiller with such intelligent depth.

Intelligence might not be what one expects from the simply rendered gag machine that is the emphamera of Nancy, but it takes a lot of work to create something so immediate. Bushmiller works in stark contrast to his biggest competitor, Charles Schultz and his more verbal Peanuts, but is no less a craftsman. Both were masters of humor, just approaching the subject from different sides. Less words and more visual impact was how Bushmiller worked his trade.

The authors deconstruct one comic strip from August 8, 1959 down to a blank page. They drill down into each element of the strip, no matter how seemingly insignificant, and in doing hit comic gold. Then they build the strip and readers back up with a master class in cartooning.

It's like a trip through time and space, and that's only the 44 chapters examining the one comic strip, which is sandwiched with a nice biography of the artist and appendixes. There are pages of Nancy strips at the end, which illustrate the lessons learned over the course of reading the book. You might not laugh out loud, but you'll be smarter for Karasik's and Newgarden's erudite book, and Nancy never fails to elicit a smile.

Jeff Buddle says

This exegesis of a single Nancy comic strip scratches the thin veneer of Ernie Bushmiller's seeming simplicity and reveals that Nancy, all clean lines and dumb gags, isn't so simple after all. No, it's the work of a master craftsman, every line intentional, the Platonic form of a comic strip. The simplicity is almost surreal; everything points to the gag.

It is, indeed, a master class in design. But it's also a master class in concision. With that, I'd recommend this book to cartoonists, graphic designers, and poets. What is needed to convey the message? What can be shaded? How can we depart from reality here? What gets the job done?

Nancy is a strip that has been unjustly maligned as stupid: the art is too simple, the gags predictable. Well, sure, that's kind of the point. Charles Schulz, the creator of Peanuts and himself a Nancy devotee, brought an unprecedented humanity to his inked characters. When I found Charlie Brown as a kid, I found myself. It was my first encounter with great art.

Nancy flips that script. Nobody is Nancy. She's unreachable, obscure. But somehow we find something in the strips. Why? Because it's art, dammit. You don't need to say anything more.

Matt Carton says

Who knew that reading a book about close reading one Nancy comic could be such a joy to read? Truth be told, I am not a Nancy fan. I purchased this book when my family visited the Fantagraphics bookstore in Seattle. Approached I take as an English teacher with text the writers do here. I put this alongside The Noble Approach in terms of discussing process. Highly recommended.

Jeff Lewonczyk says

This immediately joins "Understanding Comics" on the top shelf of books ostensibly about comics but are actually about everything, which everybody in any art medium that involves words and/or pictures should read multiple times. Though its subject is a deep dive into Ernie Bushmiller's Nancy, it's greater subject is art and aesthetics in general, and it's as exhaustive as it is delightful.

The book is divided into roughly four sections:

- A historical introduction to the life, times and context of Ernie Bushmiller
- An incredibly detailed dissection of a single Nancy strip from 1959, with 42 different sections devoted to everything from the broad (panel composition) to the minute (the way Bushmiller draws water droplets)
- A series of appendices that illuminate the touch points between Nancy and the wider world of popular culture and fine art
- A collection of Nancy strips that further illustrate the 42 points brought up in the main part of the text

Anyone who's obsessed with comics undoubtedly has this book on their radar; anyone with a more casual interest, or a strong interest in any other aspect of the arts, from theater to painting to film and beyond, should drop everything to seek this out and have your mind blown.

Col says

I expected the analysis portion of this book to be the most interesting bit, but I ended up bored to tears, and was far more interested in the introductory third and the varied appendices. Perhaps I'm not as analytically minded as I think I am. I'm sure there's someone out there for who this is the perfect book, but it's not me.

flannery says

This book is good but also kind of bullshit. Like a three panel Nancy comic can totally withstand 40-odd chapters of analysis, that's fine, also there's a lot of fun stuff and they take seriously the work that goes into a good gag. That's cool! But the introduction talks about how many "bad" comics there are out there and (while I agree) their definition of "bad" is like... sloppy linework or improvisation or whatever.... there's something kind of macho about qualitative judgments made within. But who's more like Nancy: Marlys or one of Chris Ware's weird masturbating guys? Obviously Marlys. Sometimes fun, sometimes maddening. Do these guys even like to laugh?

tim says

I've always had some primal attraction to Nancy and Sluggo despite that many find the comic tedious and lacking humor. This book explains and carefully illustrates why it is really such great art. Ernie Bushmiller was a gifted artist and his approach to illustration cautious and deliberate. The book delves into his history and influence, beautifully explaining his approach by way of a frame by frame analysis of a single strip. The book is full of Bushmiller's work before and during the heyday of Nancy comics and in its various incarnations. It is well written and thorough.

You still may not find Nancy amusing but will appreciate its influence and execution. Finally, I can enjoy this old fashioned comic without guilt or self-consciousness!

Bill says

Ernie Bushmiller's Nancy and Sluggo live in the most perfect of cartoon worlds, and this new book, How to Read Nancy, explains why. Read my full review at <https://www.interestingideas.com/upda...>
